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that includes the minimum or alternative minimum benefits and is not excessive in cost.

(ii) The Corporation will pay no share of the cost of a policy that does not provide the minimum or alternative minimum benefits described in paragraphs (b)(1)(i) and (b)(1)(ii) of this section.

Subpart C—Application Requirements

§ 2522.300 What are the application requirements for AmeriCorps program grants?

All eligible applicants seeking AmeriCorps program grants must—

(a) Provide a description of the specific program(s) being proposed, including the type of program and of how it meets the minimum program requirements described in § 2522.100; and

(b) Comply with any additional requirements as specified by the Corporation in the application package.

§ 2522.310 What are the application requirements for AmeriCorps educational awards only?

(a) Eligible applicants may apply for AmeriCorps educational awards only for one of the following eligible service positions: (1) A position for a participant in an AmeriCorps program that:

(i) Is carried out by an entity eligible to receive support under part 2521 of this chapter;

(ii) Would be eligible to receive assistance under this part, based on criteria established by the Corporation, but has not applied for such assistance;

(2) A position facilitating service-learning in a program described in parts 2515 through 2519 of this chapter;

(3) A position involving service as a crew leader in a youth corps program or a similar position supporting an AmeriCorps program; and

(4) Such other AmeriCorps positions as the Corporation considers to be appropriate.

(b) Because programs applying only for AmeriCorps educational awards must, by definition, meet the same basic requirements as other approved AmeriCorps programs, applicants must comply with the same application requirements specified in § 2522.300.

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§ 2522.320 May an applicant submit more than one application to the Corporation for the same project at the same time?

No. The Corporation will reject an application for a project if an application for funding or educational awards for the same project is already pending before the Corporation.

Subpart D—Selection of AmeriCorps Programs

§ 2522.400 How will the basic selection criteria be applied?

From among the eligible programs that meet the minimum program requirements and that have submitted applications to the Corporation, the Corporation must select the best ones to receive funding. Although there is a wide range of factors that must be taken into account during the selection process, there are certain fundamental selection criteria that apply to all programs in each grant competition, regardless of whether they receive funding or educational awards directly or through subgrants. States and other subgranting applicants are required to use these criteria during the competitive selection of subgrantees. The Corporation may adjust the relative weight given to each criterion. (Additional and more specific criteria will be published in the applications).

§ 2522.410 What are the basic selection criteria for AmeriCorps programs?

The Corporation will consider how well the program will be able to achieve the three impacts mentioned in paragraph (a) of this section as demonstrated by the program design, the capacity of the organization to carry it out and other factors relating to need. The Corporation will also consider the extent to which the program promotes the Corporation's goals; and the extent to which the program contributes to the overall diversity of programs desired by the Corporation. These criteria are discussed in this section. Additional detail relating to these criteria may be published in any notice of availability of funding.

(a) *Program impacts.* The Corporation will consider the extent to which the

program: (1) Achieves direct and demonstrable results;

(2) Strengthens communities; and

(3) Promotes citizenship and increases educational opportunities for participants.

(b) *Program Criteria.*—(1) *Program design.* The Corporation will consider four factors relating to the program design: (i) The quality of the program proposed to be carried out directly by the applicant or supported by a grant from the applicant;

(ii) The innovative aspects of the AmeriCorps program;

(iii) The feasibility of replicating the program; and

(iv) The sustainability of the program, based on evidence such as the existence of strong and broad-based community support for the program and of multiple funding sources or private funding.

(2) *Organizational capacity.* The Corporation will also consider an organization's capacity to carry out the program based on—

(i) The quality of the leadership of the AmeriCorps program;

(ii) The past performance of the organization or program; and

(iii) The extent to which the program builds on existing programs.

(c) *Need criteria.* In selecting programs, the Corporation will take into consideration the extent to which projects address State-identified issue priorities (if the program will be funded out of formula funds) or national priorities (if the program will be funded out of competitive funds), and whether projects would be conducted in areas of need.

(1) *Issue priorities.* In order to concentrate national efforts on meeting certain educational, public safety, human, or environmental needs, and to achieve the other purposes of this Act, the Corporation will establish, and after review of the strategic plan approved by the Board, periodically alter priorities regarding the AmeriCorps programs that will receive assistance (funding or approved AmeriCorps positions) and the purposes for which such assistance may be used. These priorities will be applied to assistance provided on a competitive basis as described in §2521.30 of this chapter, and

to any assistance provided through a subgrant of such funds.

(i) States must establish, and through the national service plan process described in part 2513 of this chapter, periodically alter priorities regarding the programs that will receive assistance (funding or approved AmeriCorps positions) provided on a formula basis as described in §2521.30(a)(2) of this chapter. The State priorities will be subject to Corporation review as part of the application process under part 2521 of this chapter.

(ii) The Corporation will provide advance notice to potential applicants of any AmeriCorps priorities to be in effect for a fiscal year. The notice will describe any alternation made in the priorities since the previous notice. If a program receives multi-year funding based on conformance to national or state priorities and such priorities are altered after the first year of funding, the program will not be adversely affected due to the change in priorities until the term of the grant is ended.

(2) *Areas of need.* Areas of need are: (i) Communities designated by the Federal government or States as empowerment zones or redevelopment areas, targeted for special economic incentives, or otherwise identifiable as having high concentrations of low-income people;

(ii) Areas that are environmentally distressed;

(iii) Areas adversely affected by Federal actions related to the management of Federal lands that result in significant regional job losses and economic dislocation;

(iv) Areas adversely affected by reductions in defense spending or the closure or realignment of military installations; and

(v) Areas that have an unemployment rate greater than the national average unemployment rate for the most recent 12 months for which satisfactory data are available.

(d) *Contribution to overall diversity of programs funded by the Corporation.* The Corporation will select programs that will help to achieve participant, program type, and geographic diversity across programs.

(e) *Additional considerations.* The Corporation may publish in any notice of

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availability of funding additional factors that it may take into consideration in selecting programs, including any additional priorities applicable to any or all funds.

§ 2522.420 Can a State's application for formula funds be rejected?

Yes. Formula funds are not an entitlement.

(a) *Notification.* If the Corporation rejects an application submitted by a State Commission under part 2550 of this chapter for funds described in § 2521.30 of this chapter, the Corporation will promptly notify the State Commission of the reasons for the rejection of the application.

(b) *Revision.* The Corporation will provide a State Commission notified under paragraph (a) of this section with a reasonable opportunity to revise and resubmit the application. At the request of the State Commission, the Corporation will provide technical assistance to the State Commission as part of the resubmission process. The Corporation will promptly reconsider an application resubmitted under this paragraph.

(c) *Redistribution.* The amount of any State's allotment under § 2521.30(a) of this chapter for a fiscal year that the Corporation determines will not be provided for that fiscal year will be available for redistribution by the Corporation to the States, Territories and Indian Tribes with approved AmeriCorps applications as the Corporation deems appropriate.

Subpart E—Evaluation Requirements

§ 2522.500 What are the purposes of an evaluation?

Every evaluation effort should serve to improve program quality, examine benefits of service, or fulfill legislative requirements.

§ 2522.510 What types of evaluations are States, grant-making entities, and programs required to perform?

All grantees and subgrantees are required to perform internal evaluations which are ongoing efforts to assess performance and improve quality. Grantees and subgrantees may, but are not

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required to, arrange for independent evaluation which are assessments of program effectiveness by individuals who are not directly involved in the administration of the program. The cost of independent evaluations is allowable.

§ 2522.520 What types of internal evaluation activities are required of programs?

Programs are required to: (a) Continuously assess management effectiveness, the quality of services provided, and the satisfaction of both participants and persons served. Internal evaluation activities should seek frequent feedback and provide for quick correction of weaknesses. The Corporation encourages programs to use internal evaluation methods such as community advisory councils, participant advisory councils, peer reviews, quality control inspections, and customer and participant surveys;

(b) Track progress toward objectives. Objectives will be established by programs and approved by the Corporation. Programs must submit to the Corporation (or State or grantmaking entity as applicable) periodic performance reports and, as part of an annual report, an annual performance report;

(c) Collect and submit to the Corporation (through the State or grantmaking entity as applicable) the following data: (1) Information on participants including the total number of participants in the program, and the number of participants by race, ethnicity, age, gender, economic background, education level, ethnic group, disability classification, geographic region, and marital status;

(2) Information on services conducted in areas classified as empowerment zones (or redevelopment areas), in areas that are targeted for special economic incentives or otherwise identifiable as having high concentrations of low-income people, in areas that are environmentally distressed, in areas that are adversely affected by Federal actions related to the management of Federal lands, in areas that are adversely affected by reductions in defense spending, or in areas that have an unemployment rate greater than the national average unemployment rate;